



Department of Justice

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MAN SENTENCED FOR USING SHAM MARRIAGE TO STAY IN U.S. ILLEGALLY

CINCINNATI -- Kamo Margaryan, age 23, was sentenced in United States District Court here today to five months imprisonment following his guilty plea in April to one count of entering into a marriage for the purpose of evading immigration laws. .

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, and Brian Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge, Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, announced the sentence handed down today by United States District Judge Sandra S. Beckwith.

According to a statement of facts filed with his guilty plea, the Armenian citizen entered the United States on or about June 10, 2005 on a visa that allowed him to travel and work in a program designed for undergraduate university students. His visa expired September 29, 2005. Margaryan remained in the United States and, on June 16, 2006, he married a United States citizen, in Cincinnati, Ohio.

On October 2, 2006, Margaryan began the process of applying for legal permanent resident status by virtue of this marriage. On March 16, 2007, Margaryan appeared at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (CIS) at the federal building in Cincinnati for an in-person interview regarding this application.

During an interview with authorities, the woman he married admitted that she has never lived with the defendant, and that she was paid \$700 initially to marry Margaryan. She was introduced to him by a third party who claimed that he arranged marriages for foreigners so that they would become eligible to get a "green card," declaring him a permanent resident alien.

The woman told investigators that she received \$700 in cash on the day of the marriage and \$300 each month thereafter. The arrangement was to continue until the green card was obtained, and then a divorce would be mutually sought. She became worried about lying to ICE and sought a divorce, but was rebuffed by Margaryan.

"Margaryan will now be turned over to immigration authorities for deportation," Lockhart said. "I want to commend the investigation by ICE agents who investigated this case and work to enforce our nation's immigration laws."

Lockhart also commended First Assistant U.S. Attorney William Hunt who prosecuted the case.

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